

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, NI
SUBJECT: NUTS SUPPORT NUNS AND MORE DEMONSTRATIONS

1. SUMMARY: THERE WERE MORE DEMONSTRATIONS IN IBADAN TUESDAY WHERE STUDENTS WERE SUPPORTED BY MARKET WOMEN IN THEIR PROTEST AROUND TOWN. THE NIGERIAN UNION OF TEACHERS (NUTS) HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT OPPOSING THE BAN ON THE NATIONAL UNION OF NIGERIAN STUDENTS (NUNS). MORE UNIVERSITIES HAVE CLOSED AND AT THE MOST ONLY TWO REMAIN OPEN. EFFORTS TO CLAM THE SITUATION INCLUDE PREPARATION OF REPORTS ON THE VIOLENT INCIDENTS AT LAGOS, AHMADU BELLOW AND IBADAN AND A DRAMATIC APPEAL FOR RESTRAINT BY THE MOTHER OF THE STUDENT KILLED IN LAGOS. THE FMG APPARENTLY IS TRYING TO EASE THE STUDENT PROBLEM WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME. END SUMMARY.

2. FOCUS OF EVOLVING STUDENT PROBLEM HAS SHIFTED TO IBADAN WITH CONTINUED DEMONSTRATIONS BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TUESDAY, APRIL 25. MARKET WOMEN ALSO JOINED STUDENT PROTEST WHICH COMPLAINED ABOUT
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INCREASED FEES, ARREST OF STUDENTS PREVIOUS DAY AND KILLING OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS. AT ONE POINT GROUP OF DEMONSTRATORS APPARENTLY MET WITH OYO GOVERNOR BRIGADIER DAVID JEMIBEWON, WHO ORDERED RELEASE OF STUDENTS ARRESTED EARLIER. OYO STATE POLICE COMMISSIONER ALSO ISSUED A WARNING AGAINST ILLEGAL DEMONSTRATIONS. NOTING THAT DEMONSTRATORS MUST

GIVE 24 HOURS NOTICE, AND STATED, 'THE POLICE IN OYO STATE ARE IRREVOCABLY COMMITTED TO THE PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC PEACE. WHERE NECESSARY IN THE EVENT OF VIOLENT CONFRONTATION BY STUDENTS OR PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN, THE POLICE WILL...USE MINIMUM FORCE TO DISPERSE SUCH VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS.' PRESS ALSO REPORTED THERE HAD BEEN DEMONSTRATIONS BY TEACHERS' COLLEGE STUDENTS IN ABEOKUTA MONDAY, APRIL 24.

3. DAILY TIMES REPORTED APRIL 26 THAT COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION ALI HAD SENT A LETTER TO THE PAPER SAYING, 'THE PAROCHIAL NATURE OF THE DAILY TIMES EDITORIAL (CALLING FOR HIS REMOVAL) REVEALS THE SOURCE OF THEIR MISINFORMATION AND THEIR MYOPIC VIEW OF THE STUDENTS' UNREST....' HE CHARGED THAT THE EDITORIAL WAS 'MOST IRRESPONSIBLE.'

4. THE NIGERIAN UNION OF TEACHERS (NUTS) USSUED A STATEMENT SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL UNION OF NIGERIAN STUDENTS (NUNS) AND CHARGING THAT THE BAN OF NUNS WAS 'A NEGATION OF THE FMG'S PLAN TO BUILD A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.' NUTS EXPRESSED ITS REGRET THAT NIGERIA 'SHOULD ALLOW INCIDENTS SUCH AS OCCURRED IN SHARPESVILLE AND SOWETO TO HAPPEN HERE.' IT CHARACTERIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AS 'THE MOST CARDINAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMBODIMENT OF PUBLIC OPINION.' DESPITE THE STATEMENT OF SUPPORT THERE ARE NO REPORTS OF A NUTS CALL FOR TEACHERS TO WALK OUT IN SUPPORT OF STUDENTS.

5. THE NEW NIGERIAN EDITORIAL APRIL 26 CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO REMOVE NUNS PRESIDENT OKEOWO FROM THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY SAYING, 'WE FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT IN SPITE OF THEIR MANY SHORTCOMINGS, OUR STUDENTS HAVE CONTRIBUTED THEIR OWN FAIR QUOTA TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS NATION.'

6. EFFORTS TO QUIET THE SITUATION CONTINUE. MORE UNIVERSITIES HAVE VOLUNTARILY CLOSED THEIR DOORS LEAVING ONLY SOKOTO, WHICH SAYSIT PLANS TO STAY OPEN, AND CALABAR, ON WHICH WE HAVE NO REPORTS, APPARENTLY STILL OPEN. EXCEPT FRO THE ORIGINAL THREE OFFICIALLY CLOSED BY THE FMG--AHMADU BELLO, IBADAN AND LAGOS--ALL OTHER UNIVERSITIES HAVE CLOSED THEMSELVES, MANY REFERRING TO MAY 1 AS A DATE TO RESUME CLASSES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT UNIVERSITIES WHICH CLOSED VOLUNTARILY MAY REOPEN WITH A DECISION BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR,

BUT IF CLOSED BY THE FMG, THEY MUST AWAIT FMG ACTION. IF UNIVERSITIES DO NOT REOPEN FAIRLY SOON STUDENTS COULD LOSE AN ENTIRE YEAR OF STUDY--ADING YET ANOTHER GRIEVANCE.

7. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION ALI ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY THAT A PROBE OF RECENT INCIDENTS WAS UNDER WAY. HE SAID THAT SEPARATE REPORTS WOULD BE PREPARED BY THE VICE CHANCELLORS, THE CHAIRMAN OF EACH UNIVERSITY COUNCIL, THE POLICE AND ARMY, AND THE FMG. HE ALSO SAID, 'THE GOVERNMENT IS TAKING THIS VERY, VERY SERIOUSLY. ALL THE FACTS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AND HOW IT HAPPENED WILL BE KNOWN.' AFTER THE REPORTS HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE ITS DECISION.

8. THE MOTHER OF AKINTUNDE OJO, THE STUDENT KILLED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, RELEASED A DRAMATIC APPEAL LAST NIGHT WHICH WAS READ IN FULL ON THE NIGERIAN TELEVISION NETWORK NEWS URGING CALM. TODAY'S DAILY TIMES REPORTED THE FOLLOWING FROM HER STATEMENT: 'IN THIS DARK PERIOD OF OUR SORROW AND GRIEF, WE DO NOT WISH THAT THE DEATH OF OUR SON SHOULD LEAD TO FURTHER DISTURBANCE AND BLOODSHED.'

9. COMMENT: THE FMG APPARENTLY IS TRYING TO EASE THE STUDENT PROBLEM WITH THE PASSAGE O TIME. WHILE THE PUBLICATION OF OFFICIAL REPORTS WILL MEET AT LEAST ONE OF THE POPULAR DEMANDS. THE BANNING OF NUNS AND THE INCREASE IN FEES REMAIN AS IMPORTANT ISSUES. THE SUPPORT OF MARKET WOMEN IN IBADAN FOR STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS IS A SIGNIFICANT WIDENING OF THE SUPPORT FOR STUDENT DEMANDS. IF IT WERE TO SPREAD THE SITUATION COULD BECOME EVEN MORE DIFFICULT.
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